

# **Enhancing the Revisit Intention of Nature-Based Tourism in Indonesia: The Role of Memorable Tourism Experience and Satisfaction**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The nature-based tourism in Indonesia is experiencing rapid growth which also triggered tighter competition. Competitive advantages and innovative strategies are needed by the tourism destination to survive and sustain. Tourism destination has to improve visitors loyalty that is reflected by the intention to revisit. This study aims to gain an understanding of the variables that influence revisit intentions, namely satisfaction and memorable tourism experience. A great and memorable experience's that the visitors have of a tourism destination will act as a satisfactory factor and drive the intention to revisit. The paper presents a structural model of the research and based on purposive sampling technique, a sample of 124 visitors was selected. The data analyzed by using PLS-SEM. The results indicate that satisfaction mediates the relationship between memorable tourism experience and revisit intention. So, we can suggest that it is crucial to maintaining the visitor's experience on behalf to satisfy the visitor and encourage the visitor's intention to revisit.

**Keywords:** *Memorable Tourism Experience, Satisfaction, Revisit Intention, Natural-Based Tourism, Indonesia*

## **Introduction**

The tourism industry is often perceived as an economic driving machine for the economic development of a country, including Indonesia (Munandar, 2017; Purwomarwanto & Ramachandran, 2015). This is evidenced by the increase in state foreign exchange revenues from the tourism sector from year to year. In 2015, foreign exchange from the Indonesian tourism sector

was recorded at US \$ 12.225 billion, then in 2017, up to 25.68% to US \$ 17.05 billion and potentially beating the contribution of CPO as the country's main foreign exchange contributor (Ministry of Tourism.com, 2017 ).

Referring to the great potential possessed by the tourism sector, efforts need to be made to maintain the existence and sustainability of this sector. The tourism sector needs to understand what visitors want when visiting a tourist destination. One of the things that has an important role related to what is desired by visitors is the concept of memorable tourism experience or impressive tourist experiences experienced by visitors to visit these tourist destinations in the future. This is because the impressive visitor experience can be a driver for a visitor to visit again and can influence others to visit.

The experience felt by visitors and the intention to return to a tourist destination is very urgent and relevant to study. To get the right measurement of how to assess and analyze the experiences felt by tourists, this study examines the variables of visitor experience by using the concept proposed by McCormick (2012) which consists of 7 dimensions namely hedonism, novelty, local culture, refreshment, meaningfulness, involvement and knowledge.

It is not easy for a tourism destination to making visitors revisit, especially nature-based tourism. An understanding of a visitor's experience is crucial matters since tourism products are experiential. Memorable tourism experience stems from how past visitors' memory influences decision making. Memorable tourism experience is the main information sources used by visitors to return to certain tourism destinations. It is because the memory of past experiences is a credible, valuable, and influential on future behavioral intentions (Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2013).

Satisfaction is the result of a comparison between experience and expectation. Positive emotional and intellectual experiences will increase visitor satisfaction (Turki & Amara, 2017). Satisfied visitors are more likely to return to the previous destination and more willing to share their memorable experience to others. When visitors have a positive memory, they tend to have a positive attitude and positive feelings which will remind them of the place where the experience occurred. This positive attitude will have an impact on the intention to revisit. This study attempts to identify the relationship between the memorable tourism experience, satisfaction, and revisit intention in nature-based tourism

## **Literature Review**

### *Nature-based tourism*

Tourism is one of the biggest and fastest drivers of socio-economic progress (UNWTO, 2012). It triggers the emergence of many tourist destinations and investors who are interested to invest in this sector. Tourism is a traveling and temporary stay activity carried out by someone in places outside their environment, both domestic and foreign. Tourism can be grouped based on activities carried out by tourists, such as religious tourism, health tourism, cultural tourism, and culinary tourism. One of the most popular and rapidly growing tourism which indicated by the increasing demand of various recreation activities is nature-based tourism (Fredman & Tyrväinen, 2010). From several interpretations arise in the account of nature-based tourism, nature-based tourism define as

a travel to a natural attractions in order to enjoying its beauty and engaging in a variety of outdoor activities. The attraction of nature-based tourism is nature and culture at its destination, can be in the form of biodiversity which include wildlife tourism (eg adventure safari wildlife) and vegetation (Hudson & Lee, 2010), scenery, topography, waterways (Deng, King, & Bauer, 2002), cultural visits that involve travelers to learn the culture of communities living in tourism objects (eg indigenous people or tribes in the mountains), and trips that support the aspirations of sustainable ecosystems (Divinagracia, Divinagracia, & Divinagracia, 2012).

#### *Definition of Memorable Tourism Experience*

According to Getz (2008), Memorable Tourism Experience is an impressive experience that is formed on motivation, attitudes, and expectations before visiting and as a result of reflection of events that occur in tourist visits that will affect future behavior. McCormick (2012) defines Memorable Tourism Experience (MTE) as a tourism experience that is positively remembered and recalled after the event has occurred or a tourism experience that is positively remembered and remembered after the event occurred. This definition was used in this study. According to Jong-Hyeon (2017), the Memorable Tourism Experience is an impressive experience that takes place after a tour that will last in memory and will be remembered afterwards. Experiences are a personal feeling that marketer can used as a basis to form a strategic plan (O'Dell, 2005).

#### *The Importance of Memorable Tourism Experience*

A study of memory must be included in the study of tourist experiences. Experiences tend to occur at certain times stored in a long-term memory that will provide a feeling of pleasure and will be reflected repeatedly by the individual (Tung & Ritchie, 2011). A pleasant memory of a tourism experience has a significant impact on a consumer. Pleasant memories provide a positive mood and happy feeling that plays an important role in one's life (McGaugh, 2004). In the marketing literature, memory influences consumer behavior that affect a person's process in choosing an item and service, and will affect future transaction activities, including the reuse of goods or services (Lee, 2015). From the explanation above, it can be concluded that experiences that impress or memorable tourism experience play an important role in building a tourist destination.

#### *Memorable Tourism Experience Dimensions*

The concept of measuring tourist experience has and has always undergone evolution, starting from the experience concept by Csikzentmihaly (1975), which emphasizes the theory or basis of research in the flow of positive psychology which views pleasure as an activity or to get an experience McCormick (2012). This measurement scale consists of several dimensions, namely:

- a. Hedonism refers to pleasure and excitement in activity.
- b. Novelty that refers to something new, such as giving new experiences and feeling spoiled by attractions.
- c. Local Culture refers to visitor experience the local culture of a tourism destination. The survey conducted by McCormick (2012) found that respondents who experienced or felt the local

culture during their visit turned out to have a strong recollection of the experience of the tourist visit and provided additional wealth for their knowledge.

- d. Refreshment refers to a feeling of calm, freshness and freedom that is felt during a tourist's visit.
- e. Meaningfulness refers to salience, namely a benefit by participating in a tourism activity including in. improve the mood of psychology and someone's happy feelings. McCormick (2012) also defines meaningfulness as something that gives visitors an opportunity to show or affirm their identity and the opportunity to learn various places and cultures.
- f. Involvement states that a person's level of involvement in a tourist trip increases a person's ability to recollect past experiences and describe them clearly.
- g. Knowledge is information that someone knows or realizes about the tour. Knowledge in this study is the acquisition of information and new knowledge gained by visitors when visiting tourist attractions

#### *Memorable tourism experience and Satisfaction*

Satisfaction defined as subjective evaluation of a product or service that meets or exceeds a customer expectation. Satisfaction is one of an organization's performance profitability indicator (Voon & Lee, 2009) and it has a basic role in formulating marketing plan (Fayed, Wafik, & Gerges, 2016). Some efforts should be provided to increase the satisfaction level, although it is not easy, because visitor's satisfaction depends on a number of variables (Alegre & Cladera, 2009). One of the variable is visitor's emotional feeling. Visitor's feeling about their experience such as refreshment, novelty, enjoyable, ease and safe, would constitute the satisfaction (Giacomo, Luisa, & Martina, 2014).

#### *Satisfaction and Revisit Intention*

According to Kotler and Keller (2016), a consumer usually goes through five stages in a purchasing decision, among them: problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and (post-purchase behavior). One of post-purchase behavior can described as satisfaction which defines the final result of all the activities that have been carried out during the process of purchase and consumption (Hosany & Prayag, 2013). Satisfaction is main predictor of visitor's intention to revisit (Alegre & Cladera, 2009; Choo, Ahn, & F. Petrick, 2016). Higher visitor's satisfaction will lead them to visit the destination again and/or recommend the destination to others (Fayed et al., 2016).

### **Research Framework and Hypotheses**

Based on literature review, it is important for the researcher to build some hypotheses. Hypotheses is a statement which assert a relationship between two or more concept.

The research formulate 3 (three) hypotheses to be tested:

H1. Memorable tourism experience significantly influences satisfaction H2. Satisfaction significantly influences revisit intention

H3. Satisfaction mediates the relationship between memorable tourism and satisfaction

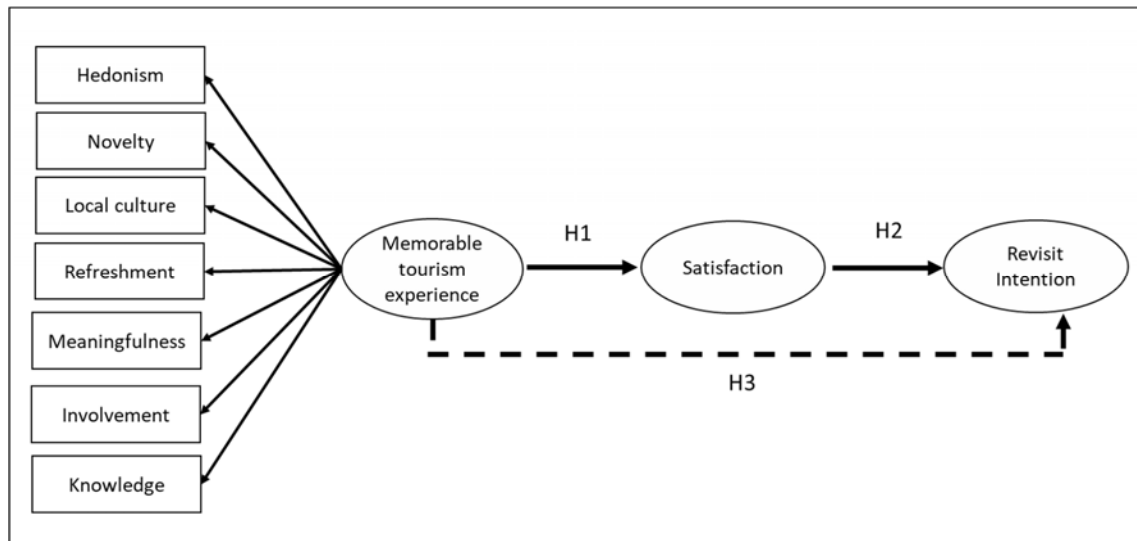


Figure 1. Hypotheses Model

## Method

This research was carried out online or by distributing question items to respondents who had visited Sumber Maron Tourism Village and on site or researchers came to tourism objects and extracted information directly from visitors. The population taken in this study were all visitors to the tourist attraction of Sumber Maron Tourism Village, Pagelaran, Malang Regency. Referring to the opinion of Hair (2014), the number of samples used in the study were 150 respondents. Non probability sampling is used as a sampling technique. The method used is purposive sampling is the determination of samples with certain considerations. The data collected by using online and on site questionnaire.

### Data Collection and Procedure

This study utilized a self-administered questionnaire survey which was carried out online or by distributing question items via online media using Google form and on site or researchers came to the tourism objects. Data collection was conducted using the purposive sampling method. The population taken in this study were all visitors of Sumber Maron Tourism Village, Malang Regency. 124 completed questionnaires were collected after eliminating invalid surveys. The visitor profile, such as gender, age, income and number of visits summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. *Sample Demographic Characteristics*

|                                | Frequency | (%) |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-----|
| <i>Gender</i>                  |           |     |
| Male                           | 84        | 68  |
| Female                         | 40        | 32  |
| <i>Age (years)</i>             |           |     |
| 17-25                          | 71        | 57  |
| 26-34                          | 31        | 25  |
| 35-43                          | 13        | 11  |
| >44                            | 9         | 7   |
| <i>Income (IDR)</i>            |           |     |
| <1 million                     | 81        | 65  |
| 1 – 2 million                  | 28        | 23  |
| 2 – 3 million                  | 9         | 7   |
| >3 million                     | 6         | 5   |
| <i>Number of visit (times)</i> |           |     |
| 1-2                            | 79        | 64  |
| 3-5                            | 26        | 21  |
| >5                             | 19        | 15  |

### *Measures*

The questionnaire were developed to assess the respondent's level of agreement on the memorable tourism experience, satisfaction, and revisit intention. The measures of memorable tourism experience is taken from Kim, Ritchie, and McCormick (2010), satisfaction from Choo et al. (2016), and revisit intention from Bonn, Joseph-Mathews, Dai, Hayes, and Cave (2007). Considering the social desirability bias of a mid-point on a rating scale (Garland, 1991), so the items in this study used ten-point scale.

### *Data Analysis*

Many marketing research used structural equation modelling (SEM). SEM techniques are proven to have good measurement quality and can be considered as an analytical tool to check the relationship between the latent constructs. When the measure of constructs is satisfactory, the technique provides the validity assessments.

This research used variance-based structural equation modeling to test the relationship of the variables, since PLS-SEM can be used to a complex model, small sample size, non-normally data distribution, formative measures, and predictive and exploratory research compared with CB-SEM. All data collected were analyzed using the Smart PLS software version 3.0. Latent variables were generated for each variables from their respective indicators.

PLS-SEM consists of two model, first is the measurement model which focuses on the items reliability and validity and the second is structural model. The PLS algorithm was used to specify the outer loading and outer weight in order to recognize the significance level of each item and in order to achieve significance of the path coefficients, and second, bootstrapping technique was performed which takes into consideration the statistical testing of the hypothesis (Henseler et al., 2009; Rezaei, 2015).

### Measurement Model

The measurement model was tested for convergent validity, which was assessed through factor loadings, composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2013). Table 2 shows that all item loadings exceeded the recommended value of 0.6 (Chin, Peterson, & Brown, 2008). CR and Cronbach's alpha values, which depict the degree to which the construct indicators indicate the latent construct, exceeded the recommended value of 0.7 (Hair et al., 2013), while AVE, which reflects the overall variance in the indicators accounted for by the latent construct, exceeded the recommended value of 0.5 (Hair et al., 2013). Discriminant validity refers to the extent to which the measures are not a reflection of some other variables' and it is indicated by low correlations between the measure of interest and the measures of other constructs. Table 3 shows that the square root of the AVE (diagonal values) of each construct is larger than its corresponding correlation coefficients, pointing towards adequate discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Hence, the result shows that all items loadings of the reflective constructs are above the minimum threshold value of 0.60 and as depicted by the CR values, all the reflective constructs have high levels of internal consistency reliability. Moreover, the AVE values (convergent validity) are above the minimum threshold level of 0.50 in consequence of that, illustrating convergent validity for all constructs. The internal consistency reliability measures of Cronbach's  $\alpha$  values are also above the minimum threshold level of 0.70. The measurement model showed an adequate convergent validity and discriminant validity.

Table 2. *Convergent validity and reliability for constructs*

| Construct and items                                          | Loadings | AVE   | CR    | Cronbach alpha |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|----------|-------|-------|----------------|
| Memorable Tourism Experience (Kim et al., 2010)              |          | 0.633 | 0.960 | 0.955          |
| Hedonism – I indulged by the activities                      | 0.707    |       |       |                |
| Novelty – It was unique                                      | 0.842    |       |       |                |
| Novelty – It was different from previous experience          | 0.788    |       |       |                |
| Novelty – I experienced something new                        | 0.831    |       |       |                |
| Local culture – I had good impression about the local people | 0.772    |       |       |                |
| Local culture – The local people were friendly               | 0.706    |       |       |                |
| Refreshment – It was liberating                              | 0.757    |       |       |                |
| Refreshment – I enjoyed sense of freedom                     | 0.770    |       |       |                |
| Refreshment – It was revitalized                             | 0.882    |       |       |                |
| Meaningfulness – I did something meaningful                  | 0.847    |       |       |                |
| Meaningfulness – I did something important                   | 0.803    |       |       |                |
| Involvement – I actively involved in the activities          | 0.796    |       |       |                |
| Involvement – I visited a place where I really wanted to go  | 0.831    |       |       |                |
| Knowledge – I learned knowledge from the experience          | 0.782    |       |       |                |
| Satisfaction (Choo et al., 2016)                             |          | 0.893 | 0.944 | 0.881          |
| I am satisfied with the destination                          | 0.944    |       |       |                |
| My overall feeling with the destination was positive         | 0.946    |       |       |                |
| Revisit Intention (Bonn et al., 2007)                        |          | 0.851 | 0.919 | 0.828          |
| If given the opportunity, I would return to this place.      | 0.944    |       |       |                |
| I would revisit this place in the future.                    | 0.900    |       |       |                |

Table 3. *Discriminant validity – Fornell Larckner criterion*

| Construct                    | Memorable Tourism Experience | Satisfaction | Revisit Intention |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Memorable Tourism Experience | 0.795                        | 0.852        |                   |
| Satisfaction                 |                              | 0.945        |                   |
| Revisit Intention            | 0.699                        | 0.703        | 0.922             |

### Structural Model

After construct validity and reliability met, the predictive capabilities and the association between the constructs through the structural model assessment.

A bootstrapping procedure was conducted, with 2000 iterations, to examine the statistical significance of the weights of sub-constructs and the path coefficients (Chin et al., 2008). As PLS does not generate overall goodness-of-fit indices, R<sup>2</sup> is the primary way to evaluate the explanatory power of the model. Regarding model validity, Chin et al. (2008) classified the endogenous latent variables as substantial, moderate, or weak, based on the R<sup>2</sup> values of 0.67, 0.33, or 0.19, respectively. Accordingly, satisfaction's R<sup>2</sup>=0.727 as substantial and revisit intention's R<sup>2</sup> = 0.494 as moderate. The results of the structural model and hypotheses testing shows that all the hypotheses were supported, indicating memorable tourism experience influence satisfaction and satisfaction influence revisit intention. The researchers also observed that satisfaction mediates the relationship of memorable tourism and revisit intention.

### Discussion

This current research is among the few studies assessing the impact of memorable tourism experience, on satisfaction and revisit intention in nature-based tourism. With the prospect of its natural attraction, nature-based tourism is expected to enhance Indonesia's competitiveness as a tourism destination. This study proposed memorable tourism experience with its elements, namely hedonism, novelty, local culture, refreshment, meaningfulness, involvement, and knowledge as the driver of nature-based tourism visitor's satisfaction and revisit intention.

Revisit intention gain a high concern in a tourism context. The willingness of a visitor to revisit a destination illustrates the significant attitudinal characteristics obtained from the effective tactics and marketing strategies. The research findings show that the visitor's intention to revisit is very important because repeated visitation will cut the company's marketing costs and generate positive recommendations.

Satisfied visitors have a higher level of willingness to revisit and recommend tourist destinations to their friends, relatives, and coworkers. Recommendations from the closest person will be more motivating and attracting to visit a destination. This will have a positive impact on the company because it will increase market share and boost profitability.

The objectives of this research were to examine the dimensions of memorable tourism experience associated with nature-based tourism in Indonesia and to investigate the relationship between memorable experience, satisfaction and visitor's behavioral intentions. There are seven elements of memorable tourism experience in this study.

The results showed that the instrument was a reliable and valid scale in the nature-based tourism context from the visitor standpoint and indicated strong, positive interrelationships among all the variables. The results are quite meaningful because the study suggest a reliable and valid scale that can be used to measure memorable experiences in the context of tourism, particularly for the management of nature-based tourism. From a theoretical viewpoint, the availability of this instrument will stimulate much-needed empirical research focusing on the impact of visitor experiences.

### **Implications**

This study makes both theoretical and practical contributions. This research composed and illustrated a model of memorable tourism experience in the context of nature-based tourism. Memorable tourism experience act as an antecedent, while satisfaction and intention to revisit are the consequences. According to Pine and Gilmore (1998) the management paradigm was shifted, from management that emphasizes service to management that builds experience. Based on the awareness that experience is subjective matters, which involving perception, awareness, and physical interaction (Sthapit & Coudounaris, 2017). Kahneman (2011) stated the difference between experience self (initial experience) and remembering self (memory of experience) that supports the opinion of customers making choices and decisions based on their memory of the experience gained. Positive and unforgettable experiences for visitor will make visitor feel comfortable and satisfied and have the desire to return (Zhang, Wu, & Buhalis, 2018). This research provides theoretical support that memorable tourism experiences influence satisfaction and intention to revisit in a nature-based tourism.

It is crucial to study visitor intention to revisit a tourism destination, since it's indicate the visitor's loyalty (Alegre & Cladera, 2009). Positive experiences during the visit will impact to visitor's satisfaction and shape the visitor's revisit intentions. Thus, managers should create memorable experiences in order to influence visitor's satisfaction and revisit intention. Tourism programs should be thoroughly evaluated to determine whether they potentially satisfy each of the identified memorable tourism experience. Visitor surveys that specifically ask about individual's memorable tourism experience could help destination managers to understand how tourism stakeholders perform. Managers of tourist destinations need to provide convenience and accuracy of information about tourist destinations that will increase awareness of potential visitors. The ease of information will make it easier for visitors to plan trips and tourist activities to be carried out. Tourism destinations also need to enhance the experience offered to visitors through the development of activities, for example, education on diverse ecosystems, history, and outdoor activities, which will be an added value to the experiences felt by visitors.

From an experience-centric approach, service innovation should be a knowledge-intensive process aimed at providing an appropriate context to enable the creation of value during the tourist experience. Insight of memorable tourism experience can help experience-centric managers to design more attractive destinations where visitor actively participate in creating emotional and fulfilling experiences. The collaboration of various stakeholders, such as public destination

management organizations, private companies, tourism employees, and residents, among others, is required to innovate those tourism programs that improve memorable tourism experience.

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